DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 307 802 FL 017 991

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TITLE Proofreading Skills and Writing Proficiency: Error Detection, Editing Accuracy and Linguistic Competence.
PUB DATE Mar 88
NOTE 23p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (22nd, Chicago, IL, March 8-13, 1988).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Editing; English (Second Language); *Error Analysis (Language); *Grammatical Acceptability; Higher Education; Language Processing; *Language Proficiency; *Proofreading; Second Language Instruction; *Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS Error Correction (Language); *Error Detection

ABSTRACT

A study investigated the relationship between writing proficiency and two aspects of proofreading: (1) the ability to detect structural errors, and (2) the ability to accurately correct them. During the fall of 1986 seventeen English-as-a-Second-Language students in the intermediate-level grammar review and paragraph writing class at Biola University were given sample paragraphs to edit. Accuracy and detection ratios were constructed from the number of correct changes, incorrect changes, and undetected errors that students made in editing the sample paragraphs, and a composite proofreader ratio was created from averaging each subject's accuracy and detection ratios. The results indicated that (1) more proficient writers were better able to detect structural errors, (2) there were no significant differences between the different proficiency levels in the ability to treat errors accurately, and (3) the difference between error detection versus editing accuracy was prominent. A sample proofreading passage, with evaluation, is appended. 21 references. (DJD)

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ED307802

University of California
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Proofreading Skills and Writing Proficiency:
Error Detection, Editing Accuracy and Linguistic Competence

A Paper Presented at the 22nd TESOL Convention in Chicago, IL
March 1988

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by

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1988

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Proofreading Skills and Writing Proficiency:
Error Detection, Editing Accuracy and Linguistic Competence

Abstract

The present study focuses on the relationship between writing proficiency and two aspects of proofreading: the ability to detect structural errors and the ability to accurately correct them. To measure these skills, accuracy and detection ratios were constructed from the number of correct changes, incorrect changes and undetected errors in sample paragraphs revised by students for whom English was a second language. Moreover, a composite "proofreader" ratio was created from averaging each subject's accuracy and detection ratios.

These three proofreading ratios were then examined for reliability and concurrent validity with holistically-scored essays. All of the ratios had fairly strong retest reliability and were pedagogically useful in diagnosing gaps in structural competence or as a vehicle for addressing a particular structure in class. However, the detection ratio, rather than the accuracy or proofreader ratios, was the best indicator of general writing proficiency, correlating with holistic composition ratings with a rho of 0.81.

Proofreading Skills and Writing Proficiency:
Error Detection, Editing Accuracy and Linguistic Competence

Native language mastery presupposes a feel for what expressions are acceptable, or for what 'sounds right.' This intuitive linguistic knowledge, or *competence*, enables the language user to differentiate between natural, normal utterances on the one hand, as opposed to either well-formed nonsense or ungrammatical, unacceptable expressions on the other (Smith & Wilson, 1982; Stern, 1973). Of course, because of divergent notions of correctness and usage, native speakers do differ somewhat in their acceptability judgements (Quirk & Svartik, 1966). However, serious deviation from structural or lexical constraints are perceptually salient to them, due to the processing problems that such violations pose (Miller & Isard, 1963; see Quirk & Svartik, 1966).

In second language acquisition, learners gradually internalize various patterns, rules and networks of sociolinguistic constraints as they attempt to approximate the performance of native speakers (Stern, 1973). Characterizing this transitional competence is a limited sense of grammaticality. Depending on the completeness of their internalized rules, learners are restricted in their ability to detect flawed utterances or recognize acceptable usage. Shaughnessy (1977), for example, posited an association between language mastery and recognition of error . Similarly, Schachter, Tyson and Diffley (1976) noted that learners have difficulty distinguishing between the grammatical versus the ungrammatical when faced with linguistic strings beyond the scope of their acquired competence.

Accordingly, the present research investigates the relationship between second language proficiency in English and the ability to discriminate

between structurally acceptable versus unacceptable written expressions. In particular, this study examines the reliability and validity of proofreading skills as an indicator of holistic writing ability.

Review of Related Literature

Although the relationship between proofreading skills and writing proficiency levels has been treated to some extent in both first language and second language composition literature, proofreading is usually discussed in the larger context of revision strategies rather than by itself. Thus, proofreading is commonly represented as grammatical or mechanical sentence-level editing, as opposed to macro-revision involving reorganization of the passage as a whole or holistic changes involving content. The former revision strategy is usually decried as a mark of less experienced writers; in contrast, better writers are said to go beyond externally-motivated linguistic and mechanical changes --namely, to aspects of the text which address the content, presentation and arrangement of their ideas (e.g., Frederick, 1985; Murray, 1978; Perl, 1979; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1983; Stallard, 1974).

Consequently, possible explanations for such contrasting revision styles between experienced and less experienced writers have been proposed. From a developmental point of view, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1979) suggested that until a writer has internalized the mechanics and syntax to the point that they no longer make heavy demands on the writer's mental resources, it is difficult for the writer to develop higher-level writing strategies. In other words, students who are still struggling to master the linguistic code can be hampered from developing holistic revision approaches because of practical mental constraints. Similarly, Wid-

dowson (1979) claimed that there is a trade-off between fluency and accuracy before language learners have mastered the linguistic forms to the point that the code itself makes only a minimal demand on their concentration during the writing process.

Such processing constraints, of course, are not a given; it is not the case that less proficient writers never address macro-level issues, nor do better writers necessarily exhibit less proofreading behavior than content-based changes. Gaskill (1986:123), for example, noted a "lack of clear revision patterns for the more and less proficient writers" in his study involving ESL students.

Nevertheless, such explanatory principles serve to link the research on grammaticality judgments with the growing number of studies focusing particularly on the relationship between editing processes and language proficiency. Although this last body of research is quite small in comparison to the bulk of work treating proofreading as an ancillary type of revision, it suggests certain intriguing trends that warrant further study.

Whereas Shaughnessy (1977) presented only a general discussion on student ability to detect and correct error as proficiency increases, Bordua (1986) documented the ability of a specific error detection test used at UCLA to discriminate between levels of second language writing proficiency. This error detection measure required respondents to identify flawed sections within various texts and was part of an in-house ESL placement battery including objective tests of vocabulary, reading, grammar and listening comprehension. In addition, a holistically-scored writing sample was administered to determine whether the subjects, all of whom were incoming immigrant students, should be placed in either the regular or ESL writing tracks. Analysis revealed that, among the objective tests given, it

was the error detection task that had the highest ability to discriminate between those students qualifying for regular freshman English versus those placing in the ESL sequence. Bordua's findings suggest that the skills involved in error detection may also be indicative of general writing proficiency.

However, since this error detection test required only general identification of phrases containing errors, what the students were reacting to is not exactly certain. Were the deviant patterns indeed identified, or did respondents make educated guesses as to which section of each sentence was flawed by eliminating the obviously correct lines? Moreover, assuming that an error was successfully detected, could it be assumed that the student who identified it would necessarily be able to correct it?

In contrast to the objective format of the above error detection task, other studies using a more naturalistic approach have also been conducted (Arthur, 1980; Hull, 1987; Odlin, 1985a; Odlin, 1985b). Accordingly, the texts used for such correction tasks were actual unmarked passages -- usually a prepared sample, although Hull (1987) also used actual student compositions.[1]

As might be expected, in noting the proofreading behaviors of higher versus lower level ESL students, Arthur (1980) and Odlin (1985b) concurred that the more proficient students were better able to detect errors. Hull

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[1] By *prepared sample* is meant a text that has been purposefully modified by distorting certain grammatical or lexical items. For example, the tense of a verb may be altered so that it is no longer appropriate, given the sequence of actions expressed in other parts of the sample. Alternatively, an obligatory inflectional ending, such as third person singular {-s}, may be deleted, rendering an expression ungrammatical. In the case of Hull (1987), subjects were given two editing tasks: one being a timed essay they had written themselves, and one being a prepared sample based on another student's essay.

(1987), moreover, obtained similar results with native speakers. In addition, Arthur (1980) found that more advanced students were less likely to mistake acceptable structures for flawed text and attempt a revision than less proficient students; likewise, Hull observed that less proficient students had more difficulty in discerning issues of correctness versus stylistic preference.

When studying the rate of successful corrections once an error was identified, however, Arthur noted a rather surprising trend: regardless of proficicency level, there was little difference in the percentage of accurate corrections made. In fact, the changes made by the upper intermediate students evidenced a slightly higher accuracy rate than that of either the low-advanced and high-advanced students. This discrepancy may have been due to a ceiling effect as Arthur himself suggested; the errors, including problems involving verb and pronoun forms as well as article usage, were perhaps too easy to correct. As a result, language-level differences between the intermediate and advanced subjects of his study might have been minimized.

However, if such were the case, it seems that the error detection patterns between proficiency-levels would also have been less distinct. The question is raised, therefore, as to whether the proofreading skills of error detection and editing accuracy equally reflect writing proficiency. In other words, does the ability to detect errors reflect competence in a sense not captured by a simple assessment of accuracy?

In order to address these issues and to see how accuracy and error detection interact with levels of writing proficiency, specific measures of proofreading ability were developed for the present study, and the following hypotheses were made:

Hypothesis 1: More proficient writers will be better able to detect structural violations than less skilled writers.

Hypothesis 2: More proficient writers will be able to accurately correct structurally deviant expressions with greater success than less proficient writers.

Hypothesis 3: The relationship between overall writing ability and error detection will not be significantly different from that of writing ability and editing accuracy.

Methods

Subjects. Participating in this study were seventeen ESL students enrolled in the intermediate-level grammar review and paragraph writing class at Biola University during the Fall of 1986. Placement in the course was based on a timed, holistically-rated diagnostic essay given at the beginning of the semester: on a six-point scale, subjects had received an average score of less than three (inter-rater reliability rho = .89). All evidenced recurrent, systematic problems in grammar.

The subjects, twelve males and five females, were primarily Asian: fourteen were from Korea, plus one each from Hong Kong, Nigeria, and Afghanistan. Of the students originally in this study, however, six were ultimately dropped because they were either unable to participate fully in the class itself, or because their final testing data were incomplete. Although four of these six eventually made-up the semester-end holistic essay, passing with an average score of (4-) or higher, they did not complete the final proofreading measure. Therefore, the analysis and results given are based on the scores of the remaining eleven subjects.

Materials and procedures.

Description of the Proofreading Measures. The proofreading measures developed for this study were designed to tap two skills involved in editing:

[1] the ability to *detect* errors, and [2] the ability to *correct* them *accurately*. Based on the changes students made to a short prepared sample, three ratios were generated: a **detection ratio** and an **accuracy ratio**, as well as a **proofreader ratio**, the average of the first two measures. The general procedures for preparing, administering and computing these instruments were as follows:

Preparation of the sample texts. Texts of general interest were adapted from periodicals, from writing samples in various composition texts, or from actual student papers. Because of the nature of the course, namely paragraph writing, a limit of one to two hundred words per passage was arbitrarily set. Each selection was then modified so that certain structural features were distorted to simulate typical ESL errors. The maximum number of distorted items was limited to ten percent of the total word count -- usually about ten per passage.

For this particular study, in response to a needs analysis done at the beginning of the semester, problems involving verbs, articles, and sentence structure were selected as the proofreading emphases.[2] Therefore, the distortions were limited to these structural areas, and proofreading passages developed from student writing samples for classwide use had errors extraneous to these focuses edited out.

Directions. Students were instructed to proofread the text and make any changes necessary to resolve the errors in the passage. Additional specific instructions were also given regarding [1] what type(s) of error(s) were present, or [2] if the number of errors per sentence was controlled. Depending on the total number and difficulty of the errors, as well as the

[2] I.e., resolving fragments and inter-clausal punctuation.

specificity of the instructions, about ten to twenty minutes was allowed per passage.

For pedagogical reasons, subjects were often asked to explain their changes in a blank column next to the passage, as illustrated by the excerpt from the class midterm in the appendix. The purpose for this instruction was to stimulate a more methodical, thoughtful approach to the proofreading task by encouraging students to consciously apply their knowledge about language to a real text. The resulting comments, moreover, highlighted gaps in grammatical knowledge that could be followed up in class. These comments, however, did not affect the computation of the proofreading measures themselves, and thus were not formally analyzed for this study.

Computing the Proofreading Ratios. The computation of the proofreading ratios was based on tallies of editing changes versus untreated errors.

Insert Figure 1, 'Sample Proofreading Passage,' about here.

The notations made by the scorer in Figure 1 may be interpreted as follows: a [✓] marks **correct changes**, [o] marks **incorrect changes**, and [x] marks **undetected errors**. Since this study focused on structural acceptability, all revisions noted entailed a grammatical polarity of sorts: that is, (a) changes from incorrect to correct, and (b) *attempted corrections* that were actually incorrect. Thus, stylistic revisions which substituted an originally correct phrase with another acceptable expression did not affect these categories and were not included in the totals. The resulting totals were then used in the following formulas to compute the detection and the accuracy ratios:

Detection Ratio = $\frac{[\surd]}{[\surd]+[x]}$ = $\frac{\text{correct changes}}{\text{total corrections needed (or, correct changes + undetected errors)}}$

Accuracy Ratio = $\frac{[\surd]}{[\surd]+[0]}$ = $\frac{\text{correct changes}}{\text{total changes made}}$ (or, correct + incorrect changes)

The detection ratio, therefore, is the percentage of correct changes to the total number of structural distortions in the prepared sample. The accuracy ratio, on the other hand, compares correct changes to the total number of changes made by the student. To obtain an overview of a student's proofreading performance these two ratios were then averaged together to get the proofreader ratio.

For example, in this proofreading sample, the student successfully revised six of the ten errors in the passage, giving her a detection ratio of 60%. Among the nine changes made, however, only six resulted in acceptable text; thus, her accuracy ratio would then be 6/9 or 67%, and her overall proofreader ratio, 63%.

Procedure overview. During the first six weeks of the fifteen-week semester, instruction on how to correct article, verb and sentence structure errors was covered in class with weekly proofreading exercises. After the students were thoroughly familiar with this procedure, a study of the test-retest reliability of the proofreading ratios themselves was conducted with an interval of four weeks between administrations. During that interval, aspects of grammar and proofreading were not stressed in class although students were required to attend weekly group conferences dealing with individualized needs evidenced in their own papers. The class sessions themselves, however, focused more on general rhetorical issues related to the writing process.

The first of the two proofreading tests used to ascertain reliability actually was a fifty-minute midterm for the course given during the seventh

week. It consisted of four proofreading passages: three focused on one of the three different proofreading emphases (namely, verbs, articles and sentence structure), and a fourth text contained a combination of all three error types.

The second version, a timed ten-minute exercise given in the eleventh week, consisted of a single proofreading passage with each of the same three error types represented. Then a week and a half after this retest measure, students participated in a timed essay exam to ascertain general writing ability. Those identified as more proficient writers received holistic ratings in the {4}-range or higher; and those identified as lower proficiency writers scored in the {3}-range or lower.[3]

Data analysis : Reliability and Validity of the Proofreading Ratios . The accuracy, detection and proofreader ratios from the two administrations described above were correlated to evaluate their test-retest reliability. In addition, the concurrent validity of these ratios was evaluated as to whether they discriminated between students of higher versus lower writing proficiency. Accordingly, the ratios obtained from the proofreading test given a week and a half before the holistic essay were compared for more versus less skilled writers using a t-test. Concurrent validity was said to have been demonstrated if the mean of a given proofreading ratio was significantly higher for more proficient writers versus less proficient ones ($p \leq .05$). In addition the strength of the association between the ratios and proficiency ratings was studied using a Spearman correlation.

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[3] Students who passed this writing measure were allowed to register in freshman composition in the spring; those who did not, continued in the ESL course sequence. Since plus and minus levels were given for the six-point scale used, the minimum for passing was {4-} and the maximum for non-passing was {3+}.

Results

Insert Chart 1, 'Proofreading Ratios & Test-Retest Reliability,' about here.

As summarized in Chart 1, there was a fairly strong positive correlation for both the detection and accuracy ratios, which evidenced correlation coefficients of .75 and .69, respectively. Moreover, when *both* of these measures of detection and accuracy are averaged for each subject, the combined information in the resulting proofreader ratio accounted for even more of the variance; the r increased to .80, as graphically displayed in Figure 2.

Insert Figure 2, 'Scattergram of Pre/Post Proofreader Ratios,' about here.

Although the proofreading ratios appear fairly stable, further research on reliability is needed with more attention given to the equivalency of the pretest and posttests. Variation in test length and administration time may have distorted these results.

As for concurrent validity, more versus less proficient writers evidenced significantly higher means on both the detection ($p \leq .005$) and proofreader ratios ($p \leq .05$). On the other hand, proficiency levels made little difference as to editing accuracy; the mean accuracy ratios of higher versus lower proficiency groups (.74 and .67, respectively) were not significantly different ($p \leq .375$). Underscoring this contrast, the detection ratio means for higher versus lower proficiency students were markedly divergent: .85 and .48 respectively, a significant difference at the .005 level (see Chart 2).

Insert Chart 2, 't-Test Data Comparing Proofreading Ratio Means of Higher & Lower Proficiency Students,' about here.

Similar results were obtained when each of these ratios was tested as to the strength of its association with writing proficiency (see Chart 3). The detection ratio evidenced a striking positive correlation of .81, compared to that of the accuracy ratio, an extremely weak .09.

Insert Chart 3, 'Spearman Correlation Data Comparing Proofreading Ratios by Writing Proficiency Ratings,' about here.

In light of these data, not only can the accuracy ratio be rejected as an indicator of proficiency level, but also the value of the proofreader ratio itself as a discriminating measure becomes rather doubtful since the accuracy ratio is used in its derivation. The data indicate that only the detection ratio is needed for concurrent validity.

Discussion. Returning to the original hypotheses of this study we find that:

1. As expected, more proficient writers were better able to detect structural errors than less proficient ones. Thus the first hypothesis was confirmed.
2. Contrary to the second hypothesis, there were no significant differences between proficiency levels as to the ability to treat errors accurately.
3. The difference between error detection versus editing accuracy was striking. Whereas the former was a sensitive indicator of writing proficiency, the accuracy ratio demonstrated no discrimnant power. Hypothesis three, therefore, was rejected.

In one sense it is not surprising that the accuracy ratio correlated so poorly with proficiency. After all, the testing on which the concurrent validity analysis was based occurred at the end of a semester of extensive

instruction on how to correct the very structural areas highlighted. If a proofreading measure had been given at the beginning of the semester along with the placement essay, perhaps a different picture would have emerged. This study, however, did not document how performance on these ratios changed over the semester, nor how it was affected by instruction. Follow up is needed in these areas.

In view of the present results, however, the question arises: if error detection is sufficient to indicate proficiency, why bother with the accuracy or proofreader ratios? In fact, from an administrative perspective, objective text-based error detection instruments such as the one described by Bordua (1986) might be a more practical alternative to this type of passage correction task. If accuracy is not a salient indicator of level, certainly multiple choice responses simply identifying the location of errors in a text would be easier to score. Why bother with a proofreading measure at all?

Although it is true that there are more efficient tasks than a passage correction task amenable to large-scale placement testing, there are at least two areas in which this proofreading measure can make a valuable contribution. The first would be what proofreading behaviors reveal about language development and cognitive processing; and the second, what they contribute to composition pedagogy.

As to the first area, these findings suggest that less proficient writer may be adept, in fact in some cases, *more* adept than more advanced students in terms of certain aspects of proofreading. Assuming that they have learned the relevant rules, they can correct structural errors with comparable accuracy. However, such monitoring is demanding, and the price paid is less efficient scanning. Therefore, assuming equivalent understanding of a given number of structural rules and equal time on a proofreading

task, the weaker writer will fail to detect as many errors as more proficient writers because of the processing load.

A corrollary of this principle would be the fact that less proficient students focus on more discrete chunks of language during the proofreading process. This idea may explain in part why the revision patterns of less skilled writers are generally associated with surface rather than holistic changes affecting meaning.

As a case in point, the student who revised the passage in Figure 1 seemed to be applying rules in isolation rather than considering contextual appropriateness. In line seven, for example, she incorrectly changes

> _ it is most common to see many generations living together under one roof.
> **to**: ... it is most common to see many generations live together under one roof.

Apparently identifying *living* as an incomplete verb, she made it finite, changing it to *live*. The result although strictly grammatical, is contextually inappropriate. With the finite verb, the utterance, rather being a general description, becomes a propositional assertion. Consequently, the sentence becomes anomalous, seeming to picture some specific (although as of yet indefinite) household where many generations of people live.

Similarly, her revision of *living* to *live* in line one, is grammatically possible, especially if *as* is interpreted as "when." However, when the larger context is considered, such a change creates reference problems. If *foreigners* (line one) no longer can be identified with the *we* in line two, the perspective of the passage becomes distorted. In other words, this student applied her knowledge of grammar independent of the text as a whole, as if syntax were independent of meaning.

Contrast the revision in Figure 1 with those of the following more proficient writer, who had a lower accuracy rating (= .64) but a higher detection score (= .90):

> As **[ ]** foreigners **who live** in a country where customs may be very different from our own**[, we]** often **[come]** up against the customs or institutions**[,]** that we cannot understand. Here in **[the]** United States, one custom that is difficult for me to understand is the separation of **[an]** older generation from **[a]** younger one. Once sons or daughters **get married** here, they **[move]** to **[a]** new home, **[and]** set up a separate household. In my country, on the other hand, it is most common to see many generations**[,]** living together under one roof. There are disadvantages to **[the]** both arrangements**[;]** however, in my opinion, **[a]** whole family benefit**[s]** significantly by keeping grandparents at home.[4]

A second area to which the use of the proofreading tasks contributes is pedagogy. Although objective measures and exercises are more efficient for large-scale testing, even those that are text-based (e.g., Bordua, 1986) lack the realia of the proofreading task which requires students to scan and correct a passage much as they would an actual paper of their own. By targeting realistic skills yet focusing on a controlled number of structural focuses, specific structural needs can be addressed in context. In the classroom, moreover, the proofreader ratio becomes a motivational measure. Since it incorporates both the accuracy and detection ratios, weaker students are rewarded for applying what they know rather than

[4] Student revisions are in bold and encased in brackets; stylistic changes made that were not counted in the correction/error tallies are in bold without brackets.

merely being penalized them for what they don't know. True, this averaging lessens the discriminant efficiency of the detection ratio; however, it encourages students to utilize their competence more effectively.

Although the following impressions were not systematically tested in this study, as students became more aware of areas of inaccuracy in their proofreading, they seemed to grow in awareness of the gaps in their own productive linguistic knowledge. As a result, several formed individualized strategies for proofreading their own papers. In fact, in the course evaluation comments, several students mentioned that learning how to revise their own papers or correct their own writing was the most valuable aspect of the class. More research, however, is needed to follow up these issues and verify these impressions.

One final note of caution in using this proofreading measure should be made: Even in a grammar class, use and discussion of proofreading ratios should be balanced with more general macro-revision issues. It would be a grave disservice if students were led to believe that 'good' writing is nothing more than 'error-free' writing. As Widdowson (1979) and Raimes (1979) wisely point out, in the trade-off between accuracy and fluency that inevitably characterizes developmental language users, exclusive focus on 'correctness' without honest interaction with the writer's ideas reduces the writing task to drudgery.

The measurement of proofreading skills not only aids the understanding of students' language development, but may also help students to pinpoint their own areas of structural need while also learning revision strategies. If combined with instruction on content-based revision, proofreading ratios are promising as a pedagogical tool as well as a test.

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Figure 1: Sample Proofreading Passage

"Many Generations Under One Roof"*

Note: Student corrections are handwritten. The scoring key is noted below:

Instructions: The following passage needs to be proofread for articles, verb forms and sentence structure [= fragments or punctuation errors between clauses]. Make any changes necessary to correct these kinds of errors by crossing out the incorrect forms and adding your corrections above the lines on this sheet.

Note— Some sentences may not contain any errors, and there will be no more than 3 errors per sentence.

As the foreigners living in a country where customs may be very 1
different from our own, we often coming up against the customs or insti-
tutions that we cannot understand. Here in United States, one custom that
is difficult for me to understand is the separation of the older generation
from the younger one. Once sons or daughters marry here, they moved to 5
new home, set up a separate household. In my country, on the other hand, it
is most common to see many generations living together under one roof.
There are disadvantages to both arrangements, however, in my opinion, the
whole family benefit significantly by keeping grandparents at home. 9

Scoring Procedure:	
✓ = Correct changes ||||| 1	Detection Ratio = ✓/(✓+X): 6/10
0 = Incorrect changes |||	Correct changes/total needed 60%
X = Undetected errors ||||	Accuracy Ratio = ✓/(✓+0): 6/9
Total changes needed = Correct changes + undetected errors = 10	Correct changes/total made 67%
Total changes made = Correct + incorrect changes = 9	Proofreader Ratio: mean (Accuracy, Detection Ratios) 63%

*Based on T.D. O'Donnell & J.L. Paiva (1986), Independent writing (Boston: Little Brown and Company), 38.

Figure 2: Scattergram of Test & Re-Test Proofreader Ratios

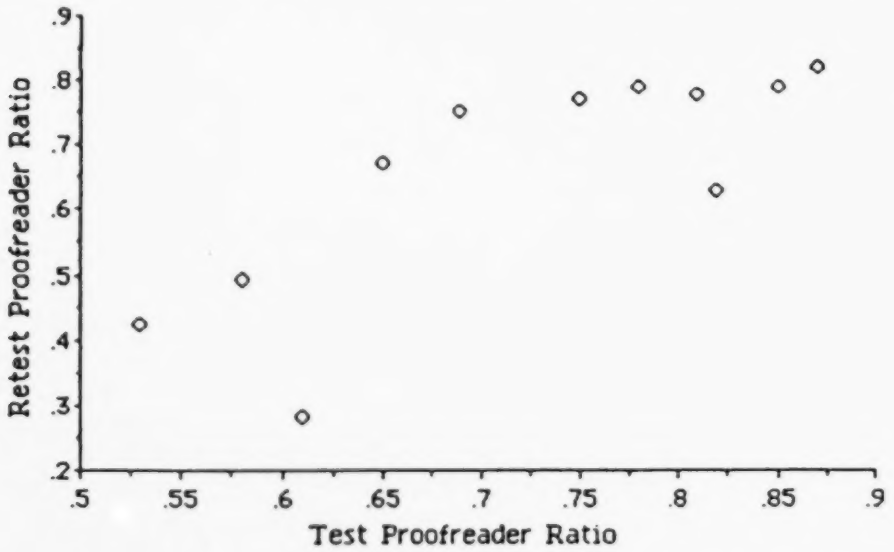

Chart 1: Proofreading Ratios & Test-Retest Reliability

	correlation
Detection Ratio	.75
Accuracy Ratio	.69
Proofreader Ratio	.80

N = 11

Chart 2: T-Test Data Comparing Proofreading Ratio Means of Higher & Lower Proficiency Students

X	Y	Mean X	Mean Y	Unpaired t-value	Significance
High: Detection	Low: Detection	.85	.47	4.297	$.0005 < p \leq .005$
High: Accuracy	Low: Accuracy	.74	.67	0.464	$.1 < p \leq .375$
High: Proofreader	Low: Proofreader	.79	.57	2.246	$.025 < p \leq .05$

N of High Ss = 4 N of Low Ss = 7 DF = 9

Chart 3: Spearman Correlation Data Comparing Proofreading Ratios by Writing Proficiency Ratings

	Detection	Accuracy	Proofreader
N	11	11	11
ΣD^2	36.5	170	60
rho	.83	.23	.73
rho corrected for ties	.81	.09	.69
Proficiency ratings tied groups	2	2	2
Proofreading ratios tied groups	4	1	1

Name _____

BENG 103, 10/27/86

Proofreading Midterm

Directions: In the following passages below there are errors relating to the usage of articles, verbs and sentence structure. Note: some sentences may not have any errors, and there will be no more than two errors per sentence. Please proofread them and make the necessary changes. Write your reasons for the changes you make in the column to the right of the texts.

1. Proofread for Articles **Corrections Explained**

An important milestone in culinary histrory was passed, virtually unnoticed sometime in 1984: number of pizzerias in United States exceeded the number of hamburger restaurants.

Edward Robert Brooks, former executive director of the American Culinary Federation, calls pizza "single most popular food in the America." Any way you slice it, pizza is hot...

At last count, there were the 36,000 pizzarias in the United States, with much of the growth in recent years coming from chains. Yet, almost the half of all pizzerias are still locally owned--especially in the East, where Italian immigrants opened first pizzarias and still make it the old way. (Based on "Our New National Dish" in Reader's Digest, May 1986, p.127-28)